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SUBJECT: ITALY GENERALLY SUPPORTS USG PROPOSAL ON NEW UN
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

REF: STATE 140192

1. (SBU) Poloff delivered Reftel demarche on July 29 to Minister Rosa Anna Coniglio, head of the MFA's Human Rights Office. Min. Coniglio is new to her job, but provided preliminary thoughts on the Italian position based on her previous human rights background (she previously worked for MFA U/S for Asia and Human Rights, Margherita Boniver). Coniglio stated that Italy's position coincides "almost completely" with the US proposal, highlighting the issue of membership in the new council as perhaps one area where more discussion is necessary. She agreed "totally" with the balance of the talking points.

2. (SBU) Coniglio noted that Italy favors a larger council more in line with Pres. Ping's vision of between 30-50 members. In her view, the size of the new council should approximate the size of the current UN Human Rights Commission. In addition, Italy would like to maintain a similar regional group "proportionality."

3. (SBU) Coniglio addressed the "conditions" for membership in the points, saying that Italy still had not developed clear ideas on the topic. Italy agrees that some qualifications are necessary to avoid the problems the current Commission experienced in the past and to improve the effectiveness of a new council. Italy, in principle, would favor some mechanism that would allow potential members to demonstrate "either before or after" membership a genuine commitment to human rights. She was not certain about how this process could be implemented, but said that Italy will discuss the details in the coming weeks with its EU colleagues and counterparts at the UN in New York.
KILNER

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